



Subdivided units in Hong Kong

Figure 1 – Distribution of SDUs by region, 2016

Region	No. of quarters with SDUs	No. of SDUs	No. of households living in SDUs
Hong Kong Island	5 906	18 080	18 030
Kowloon	14 995	52 688	52 081*
New Territories	6 211	21 888	21 676
Total	27 112	92 656	91 787

Note: (*) concentrating in Yau Tsim Mong district (21 086 households) and Sham Shui Po district (15 279 households).

Figure 2 – Median per capita floor area of accommodation by type of housing, 2016

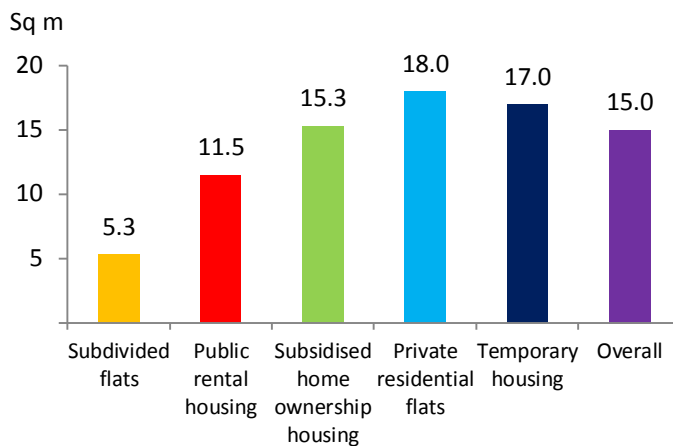
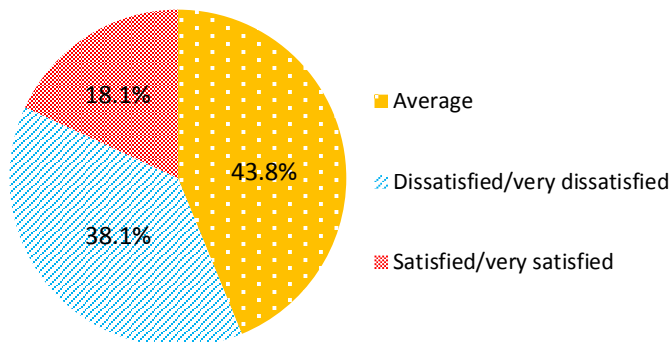


Figure 3 – Views of SDU households on their living environment, 2015



Highlights

- Demand for subdivided units ("SDUs") has remained high as limited housing supply, rising flat rentals and long waiting time for public rental housing ("PRH") have prompted many people to live in smaller flats. SDUs provide affordable accommodation to low-income families and working people, especially those who are not eligible or are waitlisted for PRH but wish to live in the urban area close to their place of work and/or to their children's place of study.
- There were about 92 700 SDUs existing in some 27 100 quarters in 2016, accommodating some 91 800 households in Hong Kong (Figure 1). Over half of SDU households were living in Kowloon, noticeably the ageing Yau Tsim Mong and Sham Shui Po districts where many old tenement buildings were found.
- The living space of SDUs is tiny and cramped. The median per capita floor area of accommodation was 5.3 sq m in 2016, which was lower than that of other types of housing (Figure 2). For example, the median per capita floor area of private residential flats was 18 sq m. The figure was lower in PRH, at 11.5 sq m, but it was still much higher than that of SDUs.
- In addition to limited living space, other issues such as fire safety, environmental hygiene, water seepage and messy electrical wiring also add to the substandard living conditions of SDUs. The Census and Statistics Department ("C&SD") surveyed SDU households in 2015 to collect their views on, among other things, their living environment. Majority of respondents either considered the living environment as average or were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied (Figure 3).

Subdivided units in Hong Kong (cont'd)

Figure 4 – Enforcement actions against SDUs by district, 2013-2017

District	No. of SDUs inspected	No. of SDUs with irregularities identified	No. of prosecutions	No. of convictions
Yau Tsim Mong	2 219	368	128	92
Kowloon City	1 742	337	164	116
Sham Shui Po	1 480	418	261	191
Kwun Tong	1 228	22	9	4
Other districts	5 502	397	102	82
Total	12 171	1 542	664	485

Figure 5 – Median monthly domestic household rent, 2006-2016

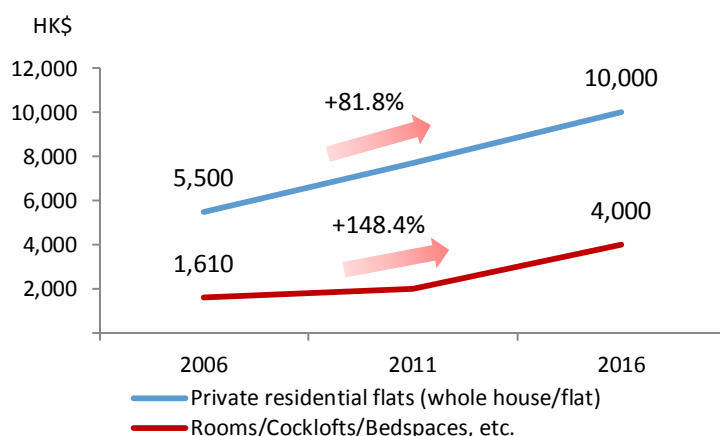
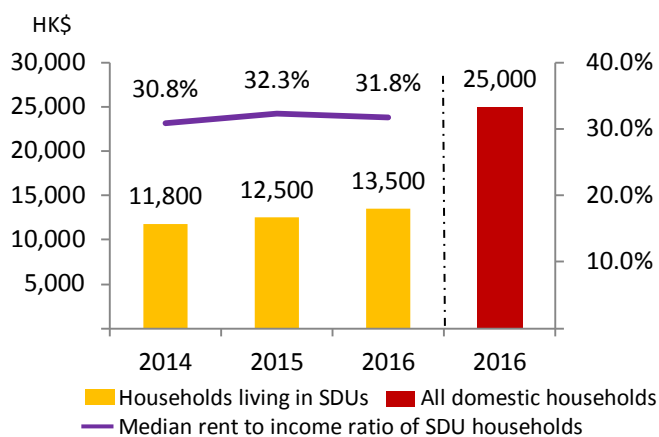


Figure 6 – Median monthly household income, 2014-2016



Highlights

- In view of the concerns over the living conditions of SDUs, the Government has conducted site inspections to investigate whether there is any contravention of the building safety regulations. It inspected a total of 12 171 SDUs during 2013-2017 (**Figure 4**), against the total number of some 92 700 SDUs reported by C&SD in 2016. The Government identified 1 542 SDUs with irregularities, and most of them were located in ageing urban areas such as Yau Tsim Mong, Kowloon City and Sham Shui Po.
- Notwithstanding the substandard living conditions, rents of SDUs had reportedly been on the rise in recent years. C&SD only started publishing the rental figures for SDUs in 2014. As a proxy measure of rental increase of SDUs over the past decade or so, the median monthly rental payment by households living in rooms/cocklofts/bedspaces etc. more than doubled during 2006-2016 (**Figure 5**), markedly outpacing rental increase for households living in private residential flats.
- Rising rents are of particular concern to SDU households, as their median monthly income was much lower than that of all domestic households in Hong Kong in 2016. The median rent to income ratio for households living in SDUs stood at a high of 31.8% (**Figure 6**), meaning that limited amount of money was left for them to spend on daily necessities after paying the rent.
- Against the above, some non-profit organizations have embarked on projects of renovating idle flats provided by private property owners and leasing them to low-income families at an affordable rent as transitional housing. For example, the Hong Kong Council of Social Service has recently announced a three-year project of soliciting idle or under-utilized housing resources in the community to provide 500 units of social housing to 1 000 grassroots households.

Data sources: Latest figures from Transport and Housing Bureau, Census and Statistics Department and Buildings Department.

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